



V-CAN CONNECTOR

Voluntary Community Assistance Network

Indiana Eligibility Modernization Project

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Director's Update

More Enhancements for V-CAN Members!

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Resources

As 2008 comes to a close, I would like to thank all V-CAN members for the feedback provided to FSSA and the IBM-led Coalition over the past year. Your suggestions, comments and questions about the new system help us identify ways to improve the way Hoosiers apply for and manage public assistance.

Based on feedback gathered from V-CAN members in Regions 1 and 2, FSSA and the IBM-led Coalition have developed an enhancement for agencies working with clients to check case status. The new enhancement is designed for human service agencies working with (rather than on behalf of) clients to check case status. Agencies will register with

the IBM-led Coalition to become a Registered Agency and obtain a signed release from clients working with the agency to access case status in any of the following ways:

- **Online** (through the Registered Agency Web Portal);
- **On the phone** (with a Call Center Representative or Automated System); or
- **Case inquiry emails** (with specialists).

Registered Agencies will have access to the Registered Agency Web Portal, which will provide access to all cases associated with the agency. With this new enhancement, a representative from a Registered Agency may use the web portal to view a list of all clients working with the agency and check case status for clients online. Additionally, Registered Agencies may check case

status over the phone, by speaking with a Call Center Representative or by using the automated phone system. Registered Agencies may also email case inquiries to specialists at the FSSA Service Center who will look into the case questions and provide responses to questions within two business days.

Becoming a Registered Agency is different than serving as an Authorized Representative. All Registered Agency staff may access case status information, rather than only one designated individual serving as an Authorized Representative. Registered Agencies cannot report changes, conduct interviews on behalf of a client or receive copies of notices mailed to clients.

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Ongoing V-CAN Outreach

FSSA and the IBM-led Coalition are continually looking for community organizations and service providers that have an interest in eligibility modernization. The V-CAN was developed as a way to provide information to organizations and providers working with clients. If you know of organizations and service providers in your community that would be interested in eligibility modernization and the V-CAN, please let us know! **Please email vcn@us.ibm.com if you know of organizations or service providers in your area that should know more about eligibility modernization and the V-CAN.**

V-CAN Registration

(Statewide, as of 11/28/08)

Access Points.....643

Publicized...195

Non-Publicized...448

Referral.....295

Informational.....401

Total.....1339

Director's Update, continued

The Registered Agency enhancement is being piloted by several V-CAN members throughout December 2008 and will be available to V-CAN members serving clients in Regions 1 and 2 in early 2009.

In addition, FSSA and the IBM-led Coalition are implementing changes to the application and redetermination processes

in early 2009. For example, a shorter, six page paper application is being developed. Automated calls will be made to applicants and clients to remind them of upcoming interview appointments and deadlines for submitting required documentation. The redetermination period for clients receiving food stamps will be extended from six to 12

months and a phone interview will no longer be required for clients receiving Cash Assistance (TANF) or Medicaid coverage.

We are excited to enhance the way Hoosiers apply for and manage their public assistance. Stay tuned for more information on the changes coming in early 2009!

V-CAN Profile: Muncie Public Library

This V-CAN Profile is the seventh in a series of profiles highlighting V-CAN members throughout Indiana. This profile focuses on The Loft at the Muncie Public Library.

The **Muncie Public Library** Maring-Hunt branch is a V-CAN Access Point offering access to computers and individual assistance when applying for food stamps, cash assistance and health coverage online. **The Loft** is a resource room at the library designed specifically for Delaware County residents interested in applying for or managing public assistance benefits. The Loft is open two days a week from 9 am – 2 pm and contains seven computers and a team of library volunteers, who are available to help applicants complete an application, check case status or report changes online.

The Loft began as an idea of Ginny Nilles, executive director of Muncie Public Library. Nilles serves on the board of Eliminating Poverty

Impact Coalition (EPIC), which is a group of individuals and community representatives who work towards eliminating poverty in Delaware County. "My role at the library could help with the community need," she said. Nilles partnered with EPIC and another local coalition, TEAMwork for Quality Living (TQL), to identify volunteers and create The Loft.

The Muncie Public Library became engaged with the V-CAN in August 2008. After attending V-CAN training, Nilles trained two library staff and six volunteers on the new ways to apply for public assistance programs. The Loft was open to the public on October 6, 2008. Library staff and volunteers help applicants walk through the Internet screening and online application, print a paper application and FAX applications and supporting documents to the FSSA Service Center.

Barbara Williams is an EPIC volunteer who coordinates The Loft volunteer shifts and provides assistance to applicants. James Williams is the designated "computer whiz" who teaches basic computer skills to patrons and helps applicants with the Internet screening and online application process. The Williams' have had a positive experience volunteering at The Loft, "People are more relaxed when they come into The Loft. It's more of a one-on-one environment. They can get on the computer, take their time, and volunteers can help them fill out the application. They have a sense of worth by doing it themselves."

The Loft is a great example of a V-CAN Access Point. The Loft serves clients by providing access, leverages community partnerships, and is a win-win for both clients and volunteers!

For more information about The Loft, contact Ginny Nilles at gnilles@munpl.org.

Q&A Corner



FSSA and the IBM-led Coalition are updating the V-CAN Q&A document, which contains common questions gathered from V-CAN training sessions. Several sample questions are included in this issue of the V-CAN Connector

Q: How can an individual apply for the M.E.D. Works program?

A: Medicaid for Employees with Disabilities or M.E.D. Works allows persons with disabilities who work and have incomes higher than the Medicaid guidelines to be eligible for health coverage. To apply for M.E.D. Works, an applicant should complete the Indiana Application for Assistance. After an application is submitted, it is screened to determine if the applicant meets the M.E.D. Works eligibility requirements.

Q: Can an Authorized Representative form be submitted with HIP applications?

A: A HIP applicant may designate an Authorized Representative to serve on his/her behalf. An Authorized Representative form should be printed from the FSSA

website and submitted to the FSSA Service Center with the HIP application. An Authorized Representative Form must be submitted for each individual on the HIP application.

Q: What is the process for submitting liability deviations to the FSSA Service Center?

A: Clients or Authorized Representatives may submit a liability deviation to the FSSA Service Center by FAX, using a case-specific, bar-coded Document Coversheet (recommended) or a coversheet with the client's full name and case number or Social Security number. A liability deviation may also be submitted using the online change reporting tool.

Q: When should an applicant or client use a Document Coversheet?

A: A case-specific,

bar-coded Document Coversheet should be used when submitting supporting documentation to the FSSA Service Center. A case-specific, bar-coded Document Coversheet is provided to applicants and clients when 2032 Pending Verification notices are mailed. A case-specific, bar-coded Document Coversheet can also be printed from the online case status tool. **NOTE:** A Document Coversheet is NOT needed to submit a Babygram (birth confirmation) or Authorized Representative form.

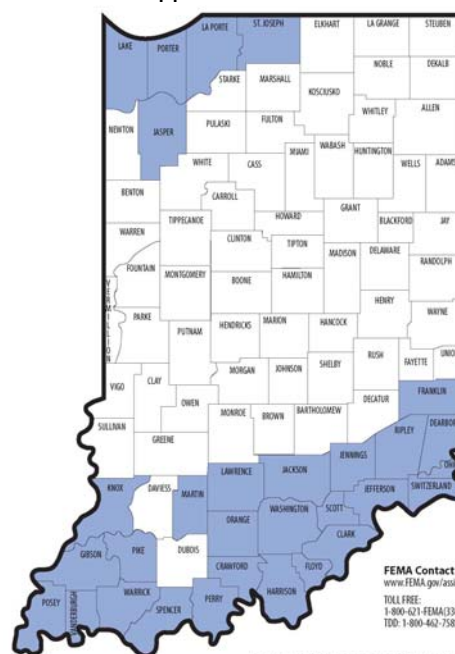
A complete version of the V-CAN Q&A will be available soon. Look for an email from the V-CAN Team with more information about the updated V-CAN Q&A.

Update on Flood Relief Efforts

Throughout September and October 2008, FSSA assisted nearly 50,000 households apply for emergency food stamps when 20 Indiana counties were declared federal disasters following the storms and flooding caused by Hurricane Ike. FSSA partnered with several state and federal agencies to open Disaster Assistance Centers throughout Regions 2 and 3 to aid storm and flooding victims. The Disaster Assistance Centers were opened in Lake, Clark and Floyd counties. At each location, Hoosiers could use computers to apply for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assistance online or talk with state and federal workers about the types of assistance available.

FSSA mobilized over 400 employees to process emergency food stamps and answer questions about disaster assistance during September and October. The newly created Indiana Office of Disaster Recovery brought together representatives from agencies including FSSA, FEMA, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, the Department of Workforce Development, the Department of Insurance, the State Department of Health, the Indiana Housing Authority, and the Indiana State Police to staff the Disaster Assistance Centers.

Counties Approved for Individual Assistance



FEMA Contact Information:
www.FEMA.gov/assistance
TOLL FREE:
1-800-421-FEMA(3642)
TDD: 1-800-462-7585

Assistance to individuals and households as a result of severe weather that began September 12, FEMA-1795-DR, Indiana Disaster Declaration

November 5, 2008

Open Enrollment for Hoosier Healthwise

The Hoosier Healthwise program is implementing an Open Enrollment policy. Currently, Hoosier Healthwise members may change Managed Care Organizations (MCO) every month. However, frequent movement between MCOs reduces continuity of care, in addition to increasing administrative costs, leaving members with gaps in coverage.

Open Enrollment will counteract these effects, providing consistent medical management and allowing a longer duration for providers to produce improved health outcomes.

Hoosier Healthwise members will now remain enrolled in their chosen MCO for a 12 month period. Members will be permitted a 90-day period during which they

may change to another MCO, or throughout the 12 month period when they have "just cause." At the end of the 12 month period, members will also have the opportunity to choose a new MCO on an annual basis.

For more information about Open Enrollment or the Hoosier Healthwise program, visit www.hoosierhealthwise.in.gov.



Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP) Update



Enrollment in the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP) continues! Hoosiers are applying for or receiving health coverage through the new state-sponsored health insurance plan for low-income adults. As of November 2008, over 106,900 Hoosiers had

applied for HIP. To date, over 6,100 applications have been conditionally approved; and another 33,900 Hoosiers have gained health coverage through HIP. If you or your clients have questions about HIP, call 1-877-GET-HIP-9, or visit

www.HIP.in.gov. If you would like to order HIP brochures and applications for your office, go to www.in.gov/fssa, click "Eligibility Modernization," then "Communications" to find the HIP materials order form.

New! Babygram Form Now Available for Hospitals

In an effort to continue improving service to V-CAN members and clients, a Babygram form has been developed for hospitals to use when adding a newborn to an existing Medicaid case.

The Babygram form contains a babygram-specific bar-code and can be FAXed or mailed to the FSSA Service Center. The Babygram form should be used **instead of** submitting a standard birth confirmation labeled with

"Babygram" and the mother's name.

If you work with a hospital that does not have a copy of the new Babygram form, please email vcn@us.ibm.com.



How Can You Get More Information?

If you have questions about Eligibility Modernization or the V-CAN, there are several ways you can get more information:

- Attend V-CAN training prior to implementation in your region
- Visit www.in.gov/fssa and click "Eligibility Modernization", then "Communications" to review presentations, common questions and answers, and other helpful information about the V-CAN and Eligibility Modernization
- Email Us! Send your questions to vcn@us.ibm.com

Mark your calendars! The next issue of the *V-CAN Connector* will be published in February 2009.

